

Treasury, to borrow at Interest such Sums of Money as may be required for the same, on the Security of the said yearly Amount of Borough Rate authorized by this Act.

'VI. And be it enacted, That the Lands and Buildings so purchased, erected, extended, or altered as aforesaid, and also all Books, Maps, and Specimens of Art and Science which may be presented to, and all Fixtures, Furniture, and Articles of every Description which may be presented to or purchased for any such Library or Museum, or to or for the said Council for the Purposes of such Library or Museum, or to or for any Committee appointed by them, shall be vested in and held upon trust for ever by the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the Borough in which such Library or Museum shall be situated, and shall be managed by the Council of the Borough (or by a Committee or Committees appointed by them), and kept in fit and proper Order, for the Benefit of the Inhabitants of the Borough and others resorting thereto.

'VII. And be it enacted, That Admission to such Libraries and Museums shall be free of all Charge.'

THE LIBRARY SCHOOL

PROGRESS AND PROBLEMS

D. M. WYLIE

AT THE recent annual conference of the NZLA, a remit emanating from the Wellington Branch was passed, urging that the Council of the Association should investigate the desirability and practicability of attaching the Library School to the University of New Zealand. Although the matter has thus been handed over to the Council to consider, it is not an inopportune time to consider the wisdom of this proposal in some detail.

Since the establishment of the Library School five years ago, and more particularly in the last two or three years, criticism of the School has found its way into the pages of *New Zealand Libraries*. The suggestion tentatively underlying much of the criticism has been that the School should be attached to the University of New Zealand, or rather, to one of its constituent colleges. In preparing this defence of the present establishment of the School, I have re-read all that has been written in *New Zealand Libraries* on the subject since 1944. It is interesting to note that the original grounds for dissatisfaction, largely put forward on behalf of holders of the Association's General Training Certificate, have been dissipated, for one of the prime movers in the motion passed at the Napier conference, 1948, requesting that the School should take over the work of tutoring for the Training Course, has expressed herself to the Wellington Branch as considering the proposals for the revised Training Course to be 'admirable'*. It is important, therefore, to consider

**New Zealand Libraries* 12:190 Ag '49.

Mr Wylie is Head of the Circulation Department, Dunedin Public Library. Library School, 1947.

the reasons, or motives, of those who have suggested or supported the change in sponsorship of the School. For once such an organization has been established, it is unwise, if not foolhardy, to alter it without the existence of compelling advantages, outweighing the very real advantages of the present *status quo*.

THREE SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT

Several opinions have been expressed supporting such a change. First, there were the sponsors of the motion passed at the Napier conference, which led more or less directly to the recent revision of the Training Course. They felt that the Course was being sacrificed to the School, and linked with this was the quite unrelated idea that public libraries were not getting enough graduates from the School*. Now that the matter of the Training Course appears to have been more or less satisfactorily settled, the latter argument has again loomed larger, and has recently, I believe, found expression in a statement circulated to the Local Authorities Section, and formed the basis of a motion regarding the School passed at their meeting during this year's conference.

Second, there is the opinion expressed in a letter to *New Zealand Libraries* 12:277-8 D '49 by Mr D. H. Borchardt, who suggests that the present School course is a 'glorified system of in-service training' for the National Library Service.

Third, there are vague general feelings on the part both of individual members of the profession and of their employing authorities, that to attach the Library School to the University would enhance the status of the profession, and also increase the chances of overseas recognition. The existence of such a general feeling was undoubtedly responsible for the passing of the motion at the conference with so little ado, although, as I pointed out at the time, in its stated terms, recommending an 'investigation' by Council into the matter, the motion was unexceptionable.

Although I shall endeavour to answer these reasons as I have given them, the argument will inevitably overlap in several places.

THE POSITION OF NON-GRADUATES

Taking first the upholders of the General Training Certificate in particular, and of the rights of non-graduate members of the profession in general, it is strange that they should think that there is anything to be gained for them by attaching the School to a self-respecting university college in New Zealand. In the first place, would the University be as generous in the matter of non-graduate students as the present School has been? For two years, non-graduate holders of the General Training Certificate were admitted to the School's course, covering two out of the normal three terms, and were awarded the certificate of the School. (The only difference between the certificate and the diploma is that the latter is reserved for those of graduate status.) More non-graduate trainees with the General Training Certificate would have been admitted if they had been offering and if they had satisfied the selection committee.

The University is apt to lay down fairly stringent conditions for admission to its degrees and diplomas, and to admit of very few exceptions. There is a variety of diploma, as distinct from degree, courses offering; and those which do not require a degree or part of a degree as a pre-requisite are diploma courses of at least three years' full-time

*See *New Zealand Libraries* 11:159-63 J1 '48.

study. Examples of the latter are the diplomas in Home Science, Physical Education and Fine Arts. Of the other diplomas, the most nearly parallel to a proposed Library School diploma are those in Journalism and Education. The former has only two special papers besides the requirement of five others, mostly Stage I BA units. The Diploma in Education, however, while it does not insist in graduation as a pre-requisite, nevertheless requires several sections of a BA degree, and, before the diploma is granted, *two* years of practical full-time experience in teaching or some other allied educational occupation are required, although the examinations may be taken before the experience is gained.

This suggests, to digress for a moment, a distinct possibility—that the present Library School diploma should not be granted until the recipient has worked two years in a member-library of the NZLA or in some other approved institution. This would overcome the objections expressed by the proponents of the 'experience-first' school of thought that the School's courses are mainly theoretical, and that there is little or no practical work at the School. This suggestion, made by Mr B. G. Hood in a letter to *New Zealand Libraries* 12:19-20 Ja-F '49, is at least contestable. For instance, in 1948, for a month, the students at the School did practical work at the Lower Hutt Municipal Library and at the National Library Service, while I am sure that Mr Hood would agree that many practical problems were encountered in the course of our Library School assignments, even if some of them did seem at times to be a bit remote.

There is, then, from the evidence of existing courses, a strong probability that prospective students of a University Library School who did not possess a considerable portion of a degree would have less show than at present of being accepted. There also seems to have been some suggestion on the part of the sponsors of the proposal that it would be possible for working assistants to do a Library Diploma part-time while they continued working in their libraries. This, of course, may be an attractive idea for those who had the good fortune to work in a library in the university city possessing the School (which would, for obvious reasons, have to be Wellington), but what about the unfortunate assistant at Dunedin, Palmerston North or Timaru? Nor is there any reason to suppose that the University would be particularly beholden to the idea of another part-time course. There is a perceptible movement in some sections of the University, both against the extension of part-time studies, and also against the continual addition of diploma courses in this, that and the other. (For instance, attempts to establish a School of Pharmacy at Otago have so far been unsuccessful.) The more insistence there is on non-graduate standards, part-time attendance and the like, the less chance there is of gaining university acceptance for a Library School.

THE STATUS OF THE SCHOOL

As far as enhancing the status of Library School graduates is concerned, it must be pointed out that, except in a few outstanding cases, the degrees of the University of New Zealand are not valued so highly overseas that the possession of a Library School diploma from that institution would gain instant overseas recognition. Some of the degrees, such as those in Medicine, Dentistry and one or two others, have a very high standing overseas, but the run-of-the-mill BA or BSc has not.

It is pertinent to add here that the best guarantee the 100 existing graduates of the Library School have that their qualifications will be recognized overseas lies in the calibre of the School's two directors to date. High-standing schools in any university are created not by the mere fact of being part of a university, but by the ability of the teaching faculty in them. Nor can it be regarded as likely that the faculty of the School would be increased through being attached to the University, because the finance would be coming from the same source as it is at present.

Finally, in this connection, it is quite certain that no university college would be happy to lend itself to the conduct of correspondence courses. Some of those who were agitating two or three years ago for the Training Course to be taken over by the School are now agitating for the School to be taken over by the University!

WHERE THE GRADUATES HAVE GONE

I shall leave there the fate of the non-graduate aspirant to the University Library School, and return to the linked objection to its present association with the National Library Service—that the public libraries have not had enough of the graduates. It is worth while, in a matter of this kind, to give exact figures. The following table shows the *present* employment of the four classes of the School which have graduated to date:

	1946	1947	1948	1949	TOTAL
NLS—Adult	9	5	5	5	24
NLS—Schools	2	2	4	6	14
Public libraries	2	6	8	3	19
University libraries	1	2	6	2	11
Govt. department libraries	3	2	1	1	7
Other libraries	3	2	-	4	9
Left library work	9	6	1	-	16
TOTAL	29	25	25	21	100

Of the 16 who are no longer actively engaged in the profession, 12 have left for marital reasons. Of the 34 men, only two are no longer in the profession. A tabulation of the first positions held by graduates shows that the National Library Service, both adult and schools, had 54 graduates to start with, compared with their present total of 38; the 'leakage' has been mainly from this group. Incidentally, the nine shown as 'Other' range from special libraries such as the General Assembly and the Alexander Turnbull to Training Colleges and the Army.

Nineteen out of one hundred may seem a small proportion to those primarily concerned with public libraries, particularly the large urban libraries. These objectors forget that the National Library Service does not operate in a vacuum. It is continually providing *service*, and that service is directed primarily at the smaller public libraries up and down the length of New Zealand; many of those shown in the table as employed by the NLS are in fact actively engaged in servicing, or preparing books for service, to the smaller public libraries.

There are, again, fourteen graduates in the Schools Library Service, doing a most valuable work, neglected in the past, and a work which no one would suggest should be abandoned solely for the public libraries.

Two at least of the large city libraries each have four graduates on their staffs, including those who were in such libraries before they went

to the School. Dunedin, for instance, has only six positions whose present remuneration is in keeping with the reasonable expectations of Library School graduates: Library School graduates hold four of them. It is doubtful whether the other large libraries have many more, while those in the next range are unlikely to be able to support more than two, or three at the outside. One thing that can be said without fear of contradiction is that, for decently-paid public library positions advertised in the past two years, there has been no lack of applicants from among graduates of the School, although they have not always been accepted. It cannot be expected that a School graduate will accept a lower-paid job in a public library just for the fun of it.

GRADUATES GO WHERE THE JOBS ARE

The vital reason why there are not more graduates in public libraries has been aptly stated by Mr Hood in a review of the NLS annual report for 1948/49*. Although he considered that the report over-simplified the reasons, he wrote: 'When the School started most of the libraries in New Zealand, while understaffed, already had librarians, and the better positions in public library work are vacated only by degrees.' Mr Hood also states that the attraction to the young graduates has been the fact that the NLS during the early years of the School has been an 'expanding service'. Fortunately this is quite true, because where else the majority of the fifty-four students who went there after graduation would have found a living wage it is hard to say. Certainly the public libraries could not have absorbed all of them.

Few good public library positions were advertised until the last two years, since when many of them have been filled by Library School graduates; those which have not almost certainly had School graduates among the applicants. Mr Roth's encouraging review of public library salaries offering in 1949/50†, and his conclusion that libraries, particularly those which provide free service, have come to realize the value of professional qualifications, says a lot for the effect the School has had in the few short years of its existence in bringing this about.

When the School was originally established, the intention was not only to provide library training, but also to attract to the profession men and women from outside. It was not suggested, so far as I can discover from the pages of *New Zealand Libraries*, that the public libraries were the only ones suffering from a lack of trained staff. Indeed, in the original proposals,‡ what is especially stressed is the need for training for special librarianship for the departmental libraries, and training for librarians in charge of children's and school libraries. It must also be remembered that the public libraries offer less purely professional work in proportion to their total staff than a university library of comparable size, or a special library such as the General Assembly or the Alexander Turnbull. If one regards, as is only right, the NLS staff as serving the larger public as much as do the independent public libraries, then only 27 of the first hundred graduates are serving a more restricted clientele. This is looking at the picture from a different angle from that put forward by claimants who suggest that the Library School has not done its duty by the public libraries.

**New Zealand Libraries* 12:222-6 O '49.

†*New Zealand Libraries* 13:64-5 Ap '50.

‡*New Zealand Libraries* 8:5 Ja-F '45.

It may here be reasonably asked what benefit in particular would accrue to public libraries as such through having the School part of a university college. Would the courses given be more 'practical' and less 'theoretical'? This is hardly likely; there would almost certainly be far more pure theory, philosophic background, etc., in a university prescription than there ever was in the Library School course as I knew it. Nor is it likely that the course would be more slanted towards public libraries than it has been in the past.

THE LIBRARY SCHOOL COURSE

Let us pass, then, to the allegation of 'in-service' training made by Mr Borchardt in the letter to *New Zealand Libraries* already cited. Two-thirds of the graduates, he claims, went to work as highly-trained civil servants, and only one-third (oddly enough, with the same training) 'took up the profession of librarianship.' An architect in the State Housing Department, a doctor in the Health Department, or an engineer in the Public Works Department, is not regarded as any less an architect, doctor or engineer for being in the Civil Service. Why should a librarian be so regarded? Mr Borchardt then claims that the School course is a 'glorified system of in-service training.' He and his fellow-critics should read or re-read Miss Parson's admirable article on library training published at the time the establishment of the School was announced*. I wonder what they would find to quarrel with in that outline of library training, and whether they would not agree that Miss Parsons and Miss Bateson have carried it out faithfully. No doubt, much of the time spent on cataloguing is not of much use to Mr Borchardt or myself in our present jobs, but it was a valuable training in library methods and necessary routines which are found in any sphere of library work.

It can hardly be maintained that all the bibliographic work, particularly in the major subject, was 'in-service training' for the NLS; again it was a lesson in library methods, and a valuable discipline gained. The fairly lengthy course on the modern novel was of more value to public librarians than to many NLS employees. The second largest single item in the year, administration reports, was far more concerned with public libraries than with the intricacies of the various departments of the National Library Service. In a single year there was much ground to be covered, and we could never complain of being under-worked; a reflection which leads one to ponder a point the advocates of a University Library School might consider. The present Library School year is far longer than the university year, and the course more intense than most at the university; could it be covered in the one year at a university college as at present constituted in New Zealand?

RECOGNITION FOR THE DIPLOMA

Mr Borchardt then joins with the third group I have mentioned above, stating in the same letter that 'we must face the fact that the Diploma is not recognized elsewhere', the given reason being that the School's curriculum does not compare favourably with those of overseas schools. An adequate reply to this contention is provided in a reply to the letter in the same number of *New Zealand Libraries* by Mr Hood, pointing out that there is some evidence for a favourable comparison of the curricula of New Zealand and overseas library schools. Mr Hood

**New Zealand Libraries* 8:54-62 My '45.

also observes that no formal attempt has been made to obtain overseas recognition for the School. Nor is there any evidence that it would not be recognized if such recognition were sought.

One wonders whether the status of the profession would really be enhanced by giving the Library School university status. Is the profession of Physical Education Teacher going to be raised because there is now a university diploma for it? Is a music teacher more highly regarded because he has a MusB (a highly theoretical degree) from the University rather than a qualification (both theoretical and practical) from a State Conservatorium? I have already shown that the mere possession of a University of New Zealand degree or diploma is no guarantee of an enhanced status in overseas eyes.

THE QUESTION OF FINANCE

From the practical point of view, the crux of the whole question of attaching the School to the University is, of course, finance. The question must be plainly asked, would government funds be so readily available for a Library School which was not so directly under its own control? To take one particular, it does not seem likely that there would be the same allowances for students that there have been in the past. They have had no fees to pay, and have had living allowances on the Training College scale, which, while no one could call it over-generous, is almost a living wage. Among the general run of university students, they would be a uniquely favoured group, a good thing for neither the School's own students nor the rest of the University; nor might a College Council, on reflection, be willing to have one single group of students in such a favoured position above the rest. Without this scale of allowances, many of the past students of the School would never have been able to undertake the course, and the profession would not have gained as many new recruits as it has done. No other group has this dispensation in its favour; a Physical Education bursary, for instance, which does not go to all students automatically, is worth only £110 p.a. for living expenses. This much is certain, as far as finance is concerned: there would be no more money available than at present for the School—certainly not enough to increase the faculty.

THE SCHOOL'S ACHIEVEMENTS

I have tried to answer the contentions of those who consider that the Library School should become a university school. I should now like to put the positive case for the School, as it is, and as an institution for training primarily graduate entrants to the library profession. In four years it has trained 100 people for the profession, many of whom are now occupying responsible positions. In the National Library Service alone, graduates fill the positions of Heads and First Assistants of the Schools, Order and Catalogue Sections; Head of the Reference Section; Librarian-in-Charge, Palmerston North Depot; Acting Librarian-in-Charge, Christchurch Depot; and two Relieving Librarians. Some graduates occupy senior positions in large public libraries—*e.g.*, the Deputy Librarians at Wellington and Christchurch; others are Librarians of smaller public libraries: Taumarunui, Petone, Greymouth, Napier and Oamaru. Others again are in responsible positions in university libraries, such as the Deputy Librarian at Otago; while still others are running departmental libraries in Government service, libraries which are playing an increasingly important part in the work of those departments.

The majority of the 100 were not in the profession before the School was established; 82 of the hundred are university graduates. The School was established as a graduate school, although from the first the admission of non-graduates was contemplated. In this connection, Miss Parsons's article already cited is worth quoting:

'Library schools count upon previous university training to give students more than a speaking acquaintance with the subject-matter contained in books with which they are to deal. Entrance requirements generally stipulate not only university graduation or its equivalent, but also certain combinations of university subjects which are considered essential in library work. . . . A library school faculty can give students a knowledge of the best current procedure known to the profession, and out of a year of working together there will emerge self-reliant librarians conscious of the philosophy and ideals of professional librarianship. Such a basic course acts as a springboard from which each student may plunge into some chosen part of library work, ready to go on independently with the reading and the study that will contribute most to this special work.'

Miss Parsons also emphasized that the confusion of clerical and professional work has resulted in low standards in libraries. Training for clerical workers in libraries was not general, she observed; in America, reliance was placed on business schools for typists, etc., while general clerical workers were instructed in their duties by each library's professional staff in accordance with its own routines—true in-service training.

Miss Parsons also raised the question of the relationship of a library school to the general educational system of a country, and surveyed current practices overseas. Although most seem to be university-sponsored, she mentions the ALA-sponsored Paris Library School, of which she was the director, and which 'sought no recognition from any university or government. Its courses were on a graduate level, and recognition came unasked from the governments and universities of a number of countries in Europe and Asia.' I would suggest that the same recognition may be afforded to the New Zealand Library School as it is, but that if it attaches itself to the University of New Zealand it may suffer a different fate.

I may also quote Mr John Barr, in his statement, as President of the NZLA, on the occasion of the setting-up of the National Library Centre:

'The Library School will likewise take some time to settle down. Indeed I hope that it will not settle down too rapidly. Here again experiment in method and technique will be all to the good of the future of the School and library training in general. In our tight little country we shall need a School particularly suited to our peculiar conditions. I hope that in our own way we may be able to originate methods which suit ourselves and may contribute something of interest to library school administrative theory.'*

The best case that has been put for the School is in an article by Mr John Harris, 'Training for Librarianship in New Zealand', in *New Zealand Libraries* 11:273-7 D '48. It is impossible to summarize it, and most Association members will have access to it, but I may recall that he emphasizes that the Library School was established to attract new

**New Zealand Libraries* 8:185-6 N '45.

recruits to the profession, and that it succeeded in doing so because the National Library Service was able to provide jobs at salaries sufficient to attract graduates in other employment. At that date, whatever the position may have become since, public library jobs offering at comparable salaries were few and far between.

OTHER COURSES RUN BY THE SCHOOL

Apart from the 100 graduates, however, including those who already held the General Training Certificate and who might not have fared so well had the School been under a university college, the School has run short courses. These 'refresher' courses have been for smaller public libraries and for the librarians of government departments; and the School also assisted materially in the course for school librarians in 1949. There have been three of these courses for the librarians of smaller public libraries—just those libraries which have been helped most by the National Library Service, and whose existence almost seems to have been forgotten by those who aver that the public libraries of this country have not benefited from the work of the Library School. As Mr Barr hoped, the Library School has been an experimental institution, peculiarly adapted to the needs of this country and its libraries at the present time; and not established under the ægis of a university as a replica of dozens of American library schools in circumstances totally dissimilar.

I cannot end more fittingly than with certain words of Mr C. W. Collins, written while President of the NZLA, in an article entitled 'From Survey to Survey' in *New Zealand Libraries* 13:6 Ja-F '50:

'We may think that the Library School should find its permanent home in a University environment, but we must admit that if there had been no other way of getting it started we should still be waiting. Most universities, and especially the clumsy, federated University of New Zealand, work slowly. By taking swift advantage of exceptional circumstances, it was possible to have the Library School approved and operating in a matter of months. It has the convenience (as well as the inconvenience!) of being housed as part of a large working library. Moreover, because it is under the auspices of the Minister of Education, it was easier to follow the precedent of the teacher training colleges and to pay students a moderate allowance while attending. It is not realized, I think, how unusual it is not to have to pay quite heavy fees and expenses for such a training. Of course it is quite right, and necessary in New Zealand, to minimize the difficulties for good people wishing to enter a profession to which the financial attraction is still negligible, however worthwhile the work itself may be. With all its defects and difficulties, the Library School has already justified itself, because in four years it has attracted to our ranks a number of first-class people, and has given new vision to many who were already in library service.'